THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRl R.VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In order to meet the requirement of the passengers, this Ministry has decided to setup 100 Budget Hotels over Indian Railways through Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) on public private partnership following open tender and competitive bidding system.

Waiting rooms and retiring rooms at stations

117. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are about six to seven lakh commuters travelling daily from Virar, Nallasopara, Vasai, Naigaon, Bhayender and Mira Road, but there is no provision for the waiting rooms and retiring rooms;

(b) whether requests made by the people of the area to set up retiring rooms has not, so far, been considered and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the railway is considering of making such retiring rooms, and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRl R. VELU): (a) to (c) Virar, Nallasopara, Vasai Road, Naigaon, Bhayandar and Mira Road are 'C Category (Suburban) Stations where as a matter of policy, waiting rooms and retiring rooms are not provided. However, waiting room facility has been provided at Vasai Road station where a large number of long distance Mail/Express trains also stop.

Incidents of looting in trains

118. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of large number of incidents of looting of the belongings of the passengers in trains after getting them senseless by offering eatables;

(b) whether it is also a fact that an organized gang of these types of looters is operating particularly in the trains from Delhi to Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam; and

(c) if so, what action his Ministry is taking to stop such organized crimes in which poor labourers are looted and are relieved of their earned money and belongings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. 135 incidents of drugging were reported during the year 2007 (upto 31st July).

(b) Yes, Sir. Some gangs of looters are operating in the East bound trains running towards Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam.

(c) Law and order being a State subject, control of crime on Railways is the responsibility of State Police. State Police has, a specialized wing to register and investigate such cases, which is known as Government Railway Police (GRP). However, to supplement efforts of GRP in controlling crime on Railways, Railway

Protection Force (RPF) has taken the following preventive measures to curb the menace of drugging:-

1. Affected/vulnerable stations and trains have been identified and special squads have been made in co-ordination with Government Railway Police (GRP) to keep surveillance in such trains/Railway Stations with a view to arrest criminals red-handed.

2. The train escorting parties are being briefed to remain extra vigilant in trains at the affected stations/sections.

3. Regular co-ordination meeting with GRP/State Police is being held to share intelligence regarding criminals indulging in drugging of passengers.

4. Regular announcements are being made through Public Address System as well as Loud Hailers to educate passengers regarding the menace of drugging. Colourful pamphlets/posters are also being displayed at prominent places of vulnerable Railway stations/trains to sensitize passengers.

5. Help of Coolies, Vendors, Taxi drivers etc. is also being taken in keeping surveillance on suspicious persons in Railway premises.

During 2007 (upto June), 35 nos. of criminals indulging in incidents of drugging have been arrested by Railway Protection Force (RPF) and handed over to Govt. Railway Police (GRP) for further legal action.

Loss to Railways due to agitation of Gujjars

119. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated losses suffered by the Indian Railways due to the recent agitation of Gujjars in Rajasthan;

(b) whether there is any provision to make up such losses;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how railways propose to make good such losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The estimated loss suffered over Indian Railways is Rupees 12,28,27,250/- due to recent agitation of Gujjars in Rajasthan.

(b) and (c) No, Sir, there is no such system. However, every conceivable precaution is taken to protect Railway property. On getting information about the said agitation, concerned Railway Protection force officials were advised to take necessary precautionary measures in co-ordination with local Police/Government Railway Police, Local Intelligence Agencies and sister departments of Railways and to ensure effective security of railways passengers, stations, trains, tracks, bridges, Level Crossing gates, etc.

(d) Since Rioters are part of a mob which goes berserk and largely consists of anonymous people, there is no way to make good the losses from them. But the Government can formulate a policy for recovery of the cost of losses from the entire population of a particular area where such incidents take place.